



Children in La Chureca

This past February, I had the opportunity to travel to Nicaragua for a one-week mission trip.

I was invited along on the trip by my father-in-law, who is one of the pastors at Stone Ridge Bible Chapel in Hamilton, to be the official trip photographer to document the team's experience and to obtain images of various cultural aspects of Nicaragua (people, nature, etc.). Stone Ridge wanted these images to use in promotional material for the Nicaragua project ("Project Desperanza"), such as brochures, books, calendars, etc.

One of their church members had traveled to Nicaragua for several years to assist with various projects that an American couple, Larry and Donna, had begun just outside Managua (Nicaragua's capitol). The name of the organization that Larry and Donna started is "Misiones de Alcance Mundial" (World Missions Outreach). This was the first year that Stone Ridge sent a team down.

One of the most impacting experiences for me was when we visited *La Chureca*, which is a slang term for Managua's landfill site. In *La Chureca*, hundreds of families live and survive by picking through garbage. We went there to observe/assist with a weekly feeding program, where a church provides food to children living in the dump. There is also a brief church service and singing prior to the distribution of the food. Some of the kids were surprisingly well kept, while others were grimy and obviously live a rough existence in the dump. I think what impacted me most was imagining one of my kids in those conditions, and how

heartbreaking that would be to me.

I wondered what the *La Chureca* kids must have thought of me, a tall sun burnt *gringo*, snapping away at them with my fancy camera. There's always a fine line in photography (as in many things) between exploitation of a subject and the desire to obtain meaningful images to give voice to the overlooked and forgotten people of this world. I pray my pictures from that afternoon convey the messiness, beauty, mystery, and hope that thread through the lives of these barefoot children of *La Chureca*.

— Lloyd Hipel



There are over 80 dumps around the world, where thousands of families scrounge for a living. See Brett Ostrander's reflections on dump ministry at brettostrander.blogspot.com



The new community center in Santo Domingo de Onzole, Ecuador. Everyone helped.



Global Ministries

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Meet the Baumans
- To Bolivia, and beyond!
- Updates from our Mission Partners
- Changes with our mission partners
- About Martha
- Walking together
- Children in La Chureca
- Onzole community center

The Global Update

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Meet the Baumans

On a mission trip after high school, Craig Bauman asked God if he should be a pastor or a missionary. Frustrated with God's lack of guidance for his career, he finally realized God was telling him, "Craig, what I want you to do is to seek me first, in all these things, including where I'm going to take you."

And this life direction has sustained him through various careers, as a youth pastor for 6 years, in various roles at International Teams, and as he married Leilani and they raise their children in this community.

Through all the tasks Craig has done, his passion is investing in other people, helping them to discover God's plan for their lives, and then becoming equipped and effective in what they are called to do.

Craig began working with International Teams (IT) twelve years ago, developing internships. Today, he is the Chief Operating Officer, in charge of International Teams' Canadian office. He oversees all the departments, including financial, technical systems, human resources, short-term teams, and caring for over 100 Canadian missionaries spread over the globe.

A key value for IT is partnerships. "Especially in a place like Africa," says Craig, "it's not about multiplying IT staff, but about coming alongside really good leaders there." And IT also partners with local churches, including Elevation, helping them manage the legal and financial aspects of sending short-term mission teams to other countries.



The Baumans: Craig, lonela, foster baby, Leilani, Elisabeth, and Katharina

Though Craig serves missionaries all over the world, he and his wife Leilani and their three children live here in Ontario. In the early years, Leilani was frustrated that God had led them to work in Canada, and not on the mission field as she expected. Then Craig challenged her, "How are you living differently here than you would in Africa?"

And so they live here as they would overseas: simply and deeply involved in their community. Leilani plants a huge garden and freezes most of their food. The Baumans also invest significantly in the people around them, like at the choir their girls attend, and more recently, in the families of the babies they foster.

Their latest endeavor is to open another "room" of the Elevation community, a smaller group that meets in Elmira. "We know there are people that aren't connecting with the traditional church," says Craig. "And smaller groups are part of what we love, where you can learn from each other, sharing life together." —Jeanette Duncan

To Bolivia, and beyond!

On February 17, a team of eleven from The Embassy, led by Julia Heyens, left for Bolivia. Most of them students, they gave up their Reading Week to serve the children there.

Niños con Valor, an organization in Bolivia directed by Tyson Malo, has two homes that serve marginalized children; the team split their time between them. They planned activities for each day, doing crafts and playing games. While most of the team was with the children, others took turns with another project, building a laundry room.

"The baby home desperately needed a laundry room," Julia said. "We weren't sure we could do it. The architect dropped out and we were over-budget." But with God's provision, everything fell into place. "They got another contractor the day before we left [for Bolivia]. It was so cool to know we left something tangible behind."

Julia's pride in her team was evident. "They were so humble-hearted and willing to be present with the kids. It was world-shaking, seeing the kids and hearing their stories."

And on behalf of the team, she expressed their heartfelt thanks to the Elevation and Embassy communities, and to International Teams. "We received so much support, and many emails telling us people were praying. It meant a lot."

What is the biggest value Julia took home with her? "You don't have to run an NGO to make a difference," says Julia. "Sometimes, hearing a person's story and being in their life is the biggest difference you can make."

— Tara Purvis



The Bolivia team

Mission Partner Updates

Dale & Janet Horst—Playas, Ecuador

Lifeline champions— Marge & Kevin Martin “Winds of change...we have laid a good friend to rest after years of health issues, about to launch a computer lab in the remote village of Onzole, and our family is preparing for a one-year sabbatical in Canada, beginning June 1 in Waterloo.”

Trevor & Rebecca Gingerich—The Embassy@Humber

“Exciting news—The Embassy @ Humber is stepping up to a WEEKLY schedule [instead of every other week], starting next semester! Pray that God would provide for our needs as we move this ministry forward. Thanks for your love and support!”

Nadine Feser—Tanzania, Africa

Lifeline champion – Michelle Farquharson “I have an appointment for a consultation with a surgeon in London next week. This is a long-awaited appointment, and will hopefully give me a better timeline of when surgery will take place and what to expect for healing and rehab.”

Brett & Grace Ostrander—The Philippines

Lifeline champions – Karl & Mary Gingerich “In the past few weeks, we have made many advances in regards to church partnerships. It has been a very important time of learning about how we can come alongside these churches, and help develop their ministries to the poor. We are very excited about the possibilities.”

Karl & Mary Gingerich (International Teams Canada)

“I’m feeling blessed for a productive fall and first-of – the new-year season. Projects (some long awaited) are going well and I’m seeing some results! Thanks for your prayers and support!!”

Terry & Brenda Martin—Niverville, Manitoba

Lifeline champions—Daniel and Deborah Gascho “In the last couple months I have been greatly challenged to exercise my faith. In reading Matthew’s gospel, I was struck by the importance that Jesus placed on faith- believing that he not only could but would perform a miracle. I am stretching my faith to believe God for some miracles- situations and needs that are beyond the realm of my capacities. I put my faith in God. If God is for us who can be against us... with God nothing is impossible.”

Nikki Horne—Guayaquil, Ecuador

Lifeline champion—Shawna Macdonald “The Onzole River Community Center is standing, after the work of two Canadian construction teams. The Onzole people continue the work by building walls, windows, and doors. Summer vacation is over in Guayaquil, and it is back to school for our Bastion kids.”

Craig & Leilani Bauman (International Teams Canada)

Lots on the go for Craig and his team at the ITCA office! A quick glance:

- 14 short-term teams in 2011 so far (at least 20 more to go)
- 10 interns trained and serving around the world (10 more preparing to go)
- ITCA spring board meetings

Gord & Sharon Skopnik (International Teams Canada)

We had a team of 9 people from different churches with us in March. We did seminars to widows, staff, and teachers on creative discipline to vulnerable children; seminars for those working with traumatized children and children in crisis; speaking at a pastors’ leadership conference, where over 65 men and women gathered from all over Sudan, even the north.



Alyssa Skopnik, in Sudan while on her 4-month internship there.

Upcoming Dates:

April:
Rising Above Ministries had to cancel their visit.

Summer:
Elevation youth go to Bolivia

Changes with mission partners

There are several significant changes to report with our mission partners:

Nadine Feser is living in Waterloo with Jeremy and Mary Horne, waiting for surgery after her fall from a cliff in Tanzania 11 months ago. She is anticipating three surgeries.

Tyson and Carolina Malo are no longer mission partners with Elevation. Tyson is working on his Bolivian citizenship,

and he and Carolina (who is already a Bolivian citizen) are pursuing business options to become self-supporting as they continue the work of *Ninos Con Valor*.

Dale and Janet Horst will be starting a year-long sabbatical on June 1. They will be living in Waterloo, as their sons attend schools here and they reconnect with family, friends and their church community. Their boys are Burke (14), Alanson (11),

Denzil (9), and Selwyn (7).

Nikki Horne and Dale and Janet Horst experienced two significant losses last week: Martha died of pulmonary fibroses and Lenny of ovarian cancer. Martha leaves her husband and 4 children and Lenny leaves 7 children. Please pray for Nikki, Dale, and Janet as they grieve the loss of their friends and help care for these children. Many of them will need financial help with school.

About our friend Martha

We buried our dear friend Martha this week.

When I think about why Martha’s relationship impacted me so much, I think it is because we had a meeting of weaknesses. I feel like we began this friendship at the end of both of our ropes, so there really wasn’t anything to prove.

I remember Dale telling me that one of our neighbours Francisco Crespin, had a wife who was ill. To hear of yet another need only made me want to withdraw into myself further, as my own personal neediness was screaming for all the attention I had.

Yet, Dale and I popped in on her and Francisco for an impromptu visit. As we sat by Martha’s bed, there was something holy that occurred between the four of us as we heard the story of their past four years: their struggle, doctor’s visits, and finally deciding that there was nothing to do but pray. And pray is what we did together before leaving their home.

In the following days, however, Dale and I felt that there was something to be done. With the help of a doctor and some friends in Canada, we found some medication and a wheelchair for Martha. Nikki Horne became deeply involved, and proceeded to find a Rheumatologist in Guayaquil who diagnosed Martha as having Rheumatoid Arthritis and Pulmonary Fibroses. With proper medication and care, Martha’s health greatly improved, even to the point of being able to walk for a time. And thus began our and Nikki’s friendship with Martha and her family.

I remember endless weeks of feeling that there was nothing I had to bring to Martha but my presence. It is interesting how presence does grow into familiarity even when there is little that two people can do to pass the time together except chat – and that was even a struggle at the time with my limited Spanish.

It didn’t take me long, however, to be quite drawn to a spunky and engaging side of Martha that I only wanted to get to know more. Watching the dynamics of her family play out as she struggled with her health, how they worked together at filling in the gaps of a mother who was unable to cook and clean, but seeing her still very engaged in their lives, inspired me. It gave me the “kick in my pants” you could say that I needed. Martha inspired me to try again. She inspired me to rethink my dreams that had seemingly crashed and learn to dream again, by her simply philosophy of engaging her world as she could.

I remember, too, one day when I was leading our women’s Bible study, and having either an “off Spanish” day or trying to expound too many Dallas Willard thoughts. I stopped and asked the three ladies if they understood what I was saying. They all admitted that they didn’t get it and I burst into tears – as did most of them too. Martha responded so graciously and said “Oh Janet, we get how you talk Spanish. It’s just that we don’t know so much about the Bible. You’re



Martha and Janet

just feeling a little too sensitive this week.”

We didn’t know Martha was entering her last week of struggle when we rode by ambulance to the hospital. In the hospital, Nikki played the important role of advocate, alongside Francisco, for the next 7 days, while we and family members took turns waiting and praying, as Martha’s heart slowed and then stopped.

In my eulogy, I asked the family to follow the example of their mother and wife, who did not allow difficult times to make her bitter, but instead drew closer to God through her suffering. This is my prayer, that as the weeks and months pass, they would find God in their loss and pain, and be able to live from Him doing a work in their lives.

Love to all, Janet

Walking together

Sharing life together isn’t easy. Becoming close to people means getting to know them, bumps and all, sharing in their pain and struggles.

For many people, the brokenness of this world becomes their pivot away from God. When tragedies like Japan happen, or death touches our own circle of family and friends, the pain can be overwhelming. How can God allow that to happen? Grief can weigh us down, and even if we know we will someday be re-united with our loved ones, eternity can seem an eternity away.

Jesus was not immune to injustice and suffering as he shared his life with those around him. One time, some people came to him to ask him about some people who had died a horrific death (Luke 13). Jesus didn’t answer the obvious question—“Why?”—but instead said, “Repent, or you too will all perish.”

And he wept at the grave of his friend, Lazarus. I believe this grief—and his love—helped Jesus grit his teeth through the hours of suffering on the cross, so he could win an eternity free of pain and suffering, and a new

heaven and earth where death no longer invades unjustly.

I hope that for us, we will allow our grief to propel us towards the Lord, and to the people around us who have not yet taken their first steps to eternity. Every person will die, but not every person will spend eternity with Jesus. That is the task that has been entrusted to us. And it is in sharing life together, whether with a neighbour in Ecuador or in Waterloo, that we widen the path to eternity.

—Jeanette Duncan



Building at Ninos con Valor